DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 418 504 EA 029 015

AUTHOR	Walker, Hill M.; Irvin, Larry K.; Sprague, Jeffrey R.
TITLE	Violence Prevention and School Safety: Issues, Problems, Approaches, and Recommended Solutions.
INSTITUTION	Oregon School Study Council, Eugene.
ISSN	ISSN-0095-6694
PUB DATE	1997-00-00
NOTE	23p.
PUB TYPE	Collected Works - Serials (022) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)
JOURNAL CIT	OSSC Bulletin; v41 n1 Fall 1997
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Elementary Secondary Education; Models; *Prevention; *School Security; *Student Behavior; *Violence
IDENTIFIERS	Oregon

ABSTRACT

This document addresses the twin issues of youth violence and school safety. Violence from the larger society has spilled over into schools in ways that can make them unsafe, and school safety has emerged as a pressing concern of public schools. Violence within the context of schooling is expressed in extreme forms of reactive and proactive aggression, antisocial behavior patterns and oppositional-defiant behavior. Schools are highly vulnerable to the damaging effects of these student behaviors and often must take radical steps to prevent, control and offset their toxic effects. This report addresses with key issues, problems, approaches and recommended solutions to these challenges to the schooling process. In addition, additional resources are recommended to establish and maintain a safe school environment and teach all students how to resolve conflicts peacefully, express empathy, develop friendships and positive relationships with others, regulate one's behavior, and accept the consequences of one's actions. It is essential that schools take steps to address two key goals in making the school safe: (1) to insure that the physical facility is designed appropriately and that the school environment is supervised carefully and (2) to establish a safe, positive, inclusive and academically effective school environment. Achievement of these two goals will make it possible for schools to again become safe havens in which to teach and socialize children. (Author)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 418 504

Violence Prevention and School Safety:

Issues, Problems, Approaches, and Recommended Solutions

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
R. Stalich
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
1

Hill M. Walker
Larry K. Irvin
Jeffrey R. Sprague

INSTITUTE ON VIOLENCE AND DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION · UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Preparation of this manuscript was supported in part by the Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence

OSSC*Bulletin*
OREGON SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL
VOLUME 41 · NUMBER 1 · FALL 1997

EA 029 015

OSSC BULLETIN

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Violence Prevention and School Safety:

Issues, Problems, Approaches, and Recommended Solutions

Hill M. Walker

Larry K. Irvin

Jeffrey R. Sprague

INSTITUTE ON VIOLENCE AND DESTRUCTIVE BEHAVIOR
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION · UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

Preparation of this manuscript was supported in part by the Hamilton Fish National Institute on School and Community Violence

OSSC *Bulletin*

OREGON SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL
VOLUME 41 · NUMBER 1 · FALL 1997

OSSC*Bulletin*

© 1998 University of Oregon

ISSN 0095-6694

Nonmember price: $15

Member price: $10

Discount 10 percent for 10–24 copies and 20 percent for 25 or more copies

OSSC Staff

Robert D. Stalick
Executive Director

Janet Curley
Graduate Research Assistant

Bobbie Smith
Membership

Brenda Kameenui
Editor

George Beltran
Design of text pages

OSSC Advisory Board

Bart McElroy, Superintendent
Salem/Keizer School District

Ron Russell, Superintendent
David Douglas School District

Elaine Hopson, Superintendent
Tillamook School District

Phil McCullum, Principal
Harrison Elementary School
South Lane School District

Robert D. Stalick, Executive Director
Oregon School Study Council

Paul Goldman, Associate Professor
Department of Educational Leadership,
Technology, and Administration,
College of Education
University of Oregon

Joanne Flint
Instruction and Field Services,
Oregon Department of Education

Cliff Kuhlman
Oregon School Boards Association

Oregon School Study Council

213 Education Building
1571 Alder Street
College of Education
1215 University of Oregon
Eugene OR 97403-1215

(541) 346-1397

Fax (541) 346-5818

The University of Oregon is an equal-opportunity, affirmative-action institution committed to cultural diversity and compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

This publication will be made available in accessible formats upon request. Accommodations for people with disabilities will be provided if requested in advance.

Violence Prevention and School Safety:

Issues, Problems, Approaches, and Recommended Solutions

Abstract

This document addresses the twin issues of youth violence and school safety. Violence from the larger society has spilled over into our schools in ways that can make them unsafe, and school safety has emerged as a pressing concern of public schools. Violence within the context of schooling is expressed in extreme forms of reactive and proactive aggression, antisocial behavior patterns and oppositional-defiant behavior. Schools are highly vulnerable to the damaging effects of these student behaviors and often must take radical steps to prevent, control and offset their toxic effects.

Herein, we deal with key issues, problems, approaches and recommended solutions to these challenges to the schooling process. In addition, we recommend additional resources to establish and maintain a safe school environment and teach all students how to resolve conflicts peacefully, express empathy, develop friendships and positive relationships with others, regulate one's behavior and accept the consequences of one's actions. It is essential that schools take steps to address two key goals in making the school safe: 1) to insure that the physical facility is designed appropriately and that the school environment is supervised carefully and 2) to establish a safe, positive, inclusive and academically effective school environment. Achievement of these two goals will make it possible for schools to again become safe havens in which to teach and socialize our children.

Contents

Abstract 3

The Big Picture: Demographics 6

The Current Landscape of Antisocial Behavior, Youth Violence and School Safety 6

Box 1: Statistics on School Safety 7

Box 2: Indicators of Decline in National Performance 7

Antisocial Behavior 7

Predictors of Delinquency and Criminal Behavior 7

Prevalence of Youth Violence 8

Box 3: APA Task Force Observations On Youth and Violence 8

Assessing School Safety 8

Developing Plans and Procedures to Enhance School Safety 9

School Safety Model 9

Figure 1: Bipolar Dimensions and Attributes of Unsafe and Safe Schools with Associated Risk and Protective Factors 9

Figure 2: Major Components of a Prototype Safe Schools Plan 10

Figure 3: Correspondence Between Target Student Type and Universal-Selected Intervention Approaches 11

Barriers to Overcome 11

The Need for Legislation to Address Problems of School Safety and

Violence Prevention and School Safety:

Issues, Problems, Approaches, and Recommended Solutions

Youth Violence	11
Media Violence	12
At-Risk Child-Find	12
Family Centers	12
Recommendations for Enhancing School Safety and Reducing Youth Violence	12
Box 4: Safe Schools Recommendations	12
Box 5: Recommendations for Reducing Youth Violence	13
Concluding Remarks	13
Footnote	13
References	14
Appendix A: The School Crime Assessment Tool	15
Appendix B: The Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)	16
Appendix C: Additional Resources on Antisocial Behavior in Children and Youth	20

Violence Prevention and School Safety: Issues, Problems, Approaches

THE SPREAD OF POVERTY, DETERIORATION of urban neighborhoods, collapse of the family infrastructure for socializing children and youth, involvement of caregivers with drugs and alcohol, failure to use good parenting practices of discipline and monitoring and all forms of abuse are producing thousands of at-risk children and families. We are faced with a national emergency that requires the mobilization of all our skills, resources and energy to address this problem. Currently, we are seeing the front end of a wedge of antisocial children and youth who are cutting a destructive swath through our society. Because of the sheer numbers already in the pipeline, the problems we experience today will become substantially worse before they get better.

Antisocial behavior, youth violence and safety are dominant concerns in today's schools. An understanding of critical issues involving these interlinked dimensions is a necessary foundation for (1) designing methods and recommendations for assessing school safety, (2) developing and implementing plans and procedures for enhancing school safety, (3) producing legislation to address solutions to school safety problems and youth violence, and (4) making recommendations for creating safe and violence-free schools. Accomplishing such preventive and ameliorative remedies is a demanding but possible and productive enterprise.

The Big Picture: Demographics

Our society has been galvanized by the specters of violence and the victimization of innocent individuals—particularly vulnerable individuals such as women, children and persons with disabilities. Media portrayals of violent acts have intensified their salience to the point where many of us believe that violence is pervasive and unavoidable (Lieberman, 1994). Our quality of life has been diminished accordingly by the constraining effects of such perceptions. Ominously, many also believe that violence has become normative for our culture and is endemic to our society—perhaps due to our pervasive exposure to it.

In spite of these beliefs, nearly all scientific studies of violence indicate that violent crime, overall, has remained relatively stable over the past 15 to 20 years in spite of much harsher sentences meted out for such crimes during this period (see Furlong, 1994; Roth, 1994). However, this does not hold true for violent juvenile crime, which is increasing dramatically in all sectors of our society. Violent crimes among juveniles increased by 41 percent from 1982 to 1991. During this same period, the number of arrests for *murder* and *aggravated assault* committed by juveniles increased by 93 percent and 72 percent respectively (Wilson & Howell, 1993). In a recent report, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention reports that the U.S. juvenile homicide rate has doubled in the past seven years. Our youth are killing each other; fifty-five percent of the victims of juvenile murders are fellow juveniles (Coie, 1994).

The U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention estimates that the number of juvenile arrests for violent crimes will double by the year 2010 and that the U.S. juvenile population will double in the next decade. In 1991, Oregon had 400,000 juveniles between the ages of 10 and 19; by 2003, that figure will grow to approximately 480,000. These statistics suggest continuing growth in rates of juveniles offending over this time span unless these rates can be offset through a coordinated plan of prevention, early intervention, and graduated sanctions. Juvenile crime rates in Oregon have tended to reflect national trends over the past decade. Juveniles currently account for 18, 34, and 27 percent of total arrests in Oregon for person, property, and behavioral crimes respectively. Juvenile arrests have shown a steady increase in Oregon since 1988, moving from just under 15,000 in 1988 to approximately 22,000 in 1994. More ominously, the number of documented gang members in Oregon has increased from 533 in 1988 to an estimated 5,164 in 1995 (Program and System Evaluation Ad Hoc Committee Report of the Governor's Juvenile Crime Prevention Task Force, 1996).

The Current Landscape of Antisocial Behavior, Youth Violence and School Safety

The social toxins of interpersonal violence, victimization and extreme forms of antisocial behavior that we observe in society at large are spilling over into our school settings in very unfortunate ways. The boxed statistics and facts on the following page document how school safety and the quality of school life have declined precipitously.

A study by the National Institute of Education revealed that 40 percent of juvenile robberies and 36 percent of assaults against urban youth took place in schools (Crowe, 1991). Clearly, juvenile street crime is spilling over into our schools at an alarming rate. Half of all students who admit bringing weapons to school say they do so for their own protection.

Box 1: STATISTICS ON SCHOOL SAFETY

- Over 100,000 students bring weapons to school each day, and 40 students are killed or wounded with these weapons annually.
- Large numbers of students fear victimization on the way to and from school where bullies and gang members are likely to prey on them.
- Twenty-two percent of students in our nation's schools are afraid to use school bathrooms because these relatively unsupervised areas are often sites for assaults and others forms of serious victimization.
- More than 6,000 teachers are threatened annually, and well over 200 are physically injured by students on school grounds.
- Increasingly, students are intimidated and threatened by mean-spirited teasing, bullying and sexual harassment that occurs at school.
- Schools often serve as major sites for the recruitment activities of organized gangs.

See Committee for Children, 1966; National School Safety Newsletter, 1966; U.S. Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, 1995; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995.

Box 2 contains results from the just-released seventh annual National Education Goals Panel Report (1997). The report lists seven key areas in which national performance has declined.

Box 2: INDICATORS OF DECLINE IN NATIONAL PERFORMANCE

from the National Education Goals Panel Report, 1997

- Reading achievement at Grade 12 has declined (Goal 3 indicator).
- The percentage of secondary school teachers who hold a degree in their main teaching assignment has decreased (Goal 4 indicator).
- Fewer adults with a high school diploma or less are participating in adult education, compared to adults who have post-secondary education (Goal 6 indicator).
- Student drug use has increased (Goal 7 indicator).
- Attempted sales of drugs at school have increased (Goal 7 indicator).
- Threats and injuries to public school teachers have increased (Goal 7 indicator).
- More teachers are reporting that disruptions in their classroom interfere with their teaching (Goal 7 indicator).

The overall juvenile crime rate and alarming increases in interpersonal violence are associated with a dramatic escalation in the number of children bringing antisocial behavior patterns to the schooling experience (Kazdin, 1993). In the past five to ten years, the number of children and families experiencing antisocial behavior has surged. It is estimated that four to six million antisocial children and youth are in our schools at the present time (Kazdin, 1993). This number is swelling at an alarming rate.

Antisocial Behavior

Antisocial behavior provides a fertile breeding ground for later development of a delinquent lifestyle and is the single best predictor we have of juvenile crime (Reid, 1993). Coie (1994) notes that if children are antisocial at home and school, they are fifty percent more likely to be violent than if they are antisocial in only one of these settings. Schools are increasingly victimized by children and youth who are themselves victims of pervasive poverty, abuse, neglect, chaotic family environments, crime-ridden neighborhoods, racial discrimination, a sense of hopelessness and so on (Soriano, 1994).

Predictors of Delinquency and Criminal Behavior

Recent research by Patterson and his colleagues (Capaldi & Patterson, in press) indicates that violent juvenile offenders most often share three characteristics: (1) they have their first felony arrest at an early age (age ten or younger), (2) their first arrest tends to be for a serious offense and (3) they are chronic offenders (three or more arrests by early adolescence). This profile identifies an extremely high percentage of later violent juvenile offenders. The vast majority of these youth engage in predominantly antisocial behavior patterns from earliest childhood.

The Oregon Social Learning Center (OSLC) has conducted cross-sectional and longitudinal research studies on the family and risk factors associated with children and youth adopting antisocial behavior patterns that lead to juvenile delinquency and adult criminal behavior (see Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992). The OSLC analysis identifies six key risk factors strongly associated with becoming a juvenile offender. They are: (a) mother was ever arrested, (b) father was ever arrested, (c) documented involvement with child protective services, (d) at least one family transition (e.g., divorce), (e) ever received special education services and (f) early onset of antisocial behavior. OSLC research shows that any combination of three of these factors puts the child or youth at substantial risk of becoming a juvenile offender.

Within the context of schooling, Walker and his colleagues (Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995) have found the following

three risk factors, present in grade five, to be highly predictive of arrests in grade ten, within a high-risk sample of males: weak social skills, a higher than normal frequency of within-school discipline referrals from teachers, and a high rate of negative, aggressive behavior directed toward peers on the playground (i.e., more than 12 percent of the time observed). Similarly, Tobin, Sugai and Colvin (1996) found that office referrals for discipline problems involving harassment or fighting in grade six was a reliable predictor for serious behavior problems in grade 8. Even one such referral in grade six was associated with deferred high school graduation. These risk factors are valuable in that they allow us to identify for intervention those students who are likely to be unsuccessful in school, who will eventually drop out, and who are likely to be arrested one or more times for delinquent acts.

Prevalence of Youth Violence

The American Psychological Association (1993) recently produced a superb synthesis of the knowledge base related to the prevalence of violence among youth, associated causal factors and recommended approaches to addressing this violence (see *Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response*). This task force report makes some important observations (see Box 3 below).

Box 3: APA TASK FORCE OBSERVATIONS ON YOUTH AND VIOLENCE

1. Violence is not the human condition; it is learned behavior that is preventable.
2. Violence cuts across all lines of culture and ethnicity; it is not exclusive to any single group or class.
3. Prevention of violence requires education of and by all segments of society; it requires a reassessment of how conflict is view and resolved.
4. There are four individual social experiences that contribute powerfully to the increase in violence among children and youth: easy access to firearms—especially handguns, early involvement with drugs and alcohol, association with antisocial groups, and pervasive exposure to violent acts portrayed in the media.
5. Schools must be a hub or key center of activity in the development of comprehensive, interagency interventions for the prevention and remediation of violent behavior.

The American Psychological Association report makes clear that youth violence is pervasive in our society, is a result of multiple causes and will require complex, multiple solutions if it is to be dealt with effectively. We currently do not have educational models and procedures for effectively addressing these outcomes. There has never been a demonstrated "cure" for delinquent behavior or a delinquent lifestyle. The same is true for antisocial behavior patterns. The best we can say at present is that some promising practices impact these problems to some extent (Reid, 1993). These practices include the following: (1) whole-school approaches in which the problems and needs of all students are addressed, (2) comprehensive early intervention approaches mounted at the point of school entry and (3) direct parent training and support in parenting practices that have been proven to work (Patterson, Reid, & Dishion, 1992).

Assessing School Safety

There are two dimensions of school safety that every school should consider. One has to do with the overall safety of the school building and grounds. That is, relative to normative standards as defined by schools in general, how safe and secure is the setting from victimization by violence, vandalism, gang activity and so on? The other equally important dimension of school safety has to do with the risk factors that reduce overall school safety and the protective factors that enhance it. A school profile that is characterized by a high number of risk factors and low availability of protective factors is likely to be an unsafe school, and a school profile with a low number of risk factors and high availability of protective factors is likely to be a safe school. It is important that schools consider strategies for assessing these two dimensions of school safety at least annually. Some recommended strategies and instruments for conducting these assessments are briefly described below.

To address the first dimension of overall safety of schools, the National School Safety Center has developed the School Crime Assessment Tool. A copy of this 20-item instrument is contained in Appendix A. Permission to reproduce and use it can be obtained from the National School Safety Center, Suite 290, 4165 Thousand Oaks Boulevard, Westlake Village, CA 91362. Each "yes" answer to questions on the scale is assigned a value of five points. The scale can be completed by the school principal, a school wide teacher assistance team, or a site-based management council. Total score on this instrument provides an estimate of the overall status of the school on the dimension of school safety. A score of 70 or more indicates very serious school safety problems; a score of 50 or more suggests the existence of significant problems in this area. A score between 25 and 45 indicates the need to develop a school safety plan. This measure provides a quick and easy estimate of relative school safety and should be considered as a first step to address the issue of school safety.

To address specific risk and protective factors in schools, the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior (IVDB) in the College of Education at the University of Oregon has developed the Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS) (Sprague, Colvin, Irvin, & Stieber, 1997a). A copy of this instrument is contained in Appendix B. Permission to use it can be obtained by contacting the developers.

The OSSS contains descriptions of 17 risk factors (those that

increase the chance of violence and reduce school safety) and 16 protective factors (those that buffer against violence and enhance school safety). These items were developed based upon a review of the literature on violence prevention and crisis management in schools (e.g., Furlong & Morrison, 1994). Each item is rated on a five-point scale that estimates the extent to which each risk and protective factor exists or is in place.

The purpose of this instrument is to assist educators in evaluating: (1) the extent to which the school provides a safe learning environment, (2) training and support needs related to school safety and violence prevention and (3) responses to school safety and violence. The survey is divided into three sections. Section One identifies the major risk factors associated with school safety and violence and the school's status on them. Section Two lists common protective factors and existing response plans to address school safety and violence concerns. Section Three provides respondents with an opportunity to make narrative comments regarding school safety and violence prevention; five questions are provided that allow open-ended comments.

Under auspices of the statewide Confederation of School Administrators, the survey was distributed to a sample of elementary, middle and high school principals in Oregon. Usable data were obtained from 346 surveys representing a like number of Oregon schools. Detailed results are described in Sprague, Colvin, Irvin, & Stieber (1997b). Preliminary analyses indicate that the instrument has excellent psychometric characteristics and results (i.e., rankings of risk and protective factors), varied to some extent as predicted across elementary, middle and high schools. Further studies of OSSS psychometrics and normative levels are planned by investigators within the IVDB. In addition, use of the instrument as a basis for developing safe school plans will be evaluated as part of this effort.

Developing Plans and Procedures to Enhance School Safety

A realistic goal of schools is to help divert at-risk children and youth from a path leading to delinquency, interpersonal violence, gang membership and a life of crime. In order to achieve this goal, we have to impact, whenever possible, the three social agents that have the greatest influence on the development of children and youth: parents, teachers and peers. Intervention has to begin early in a child's life—preferably at the point of school entry or even earlier if possible. The school has to play a key coordinating role in the intervention process and involve parents and community agencies meaningfully in partnerships for change (Bierman, Coie, Dodge, Greenberg, Lochman, & McMahon, 1992). Support, resources and assistance need to follow at-risk children and families rather than be tied to agencies as is currently the practice (Reid, 1993). If our society can marshal and coordinate these elements, it may be possible to actually prevent antisocial behavior and its associated outcomes in many instances. The National Institute of Mental Health has funded a series of multi site prevention centers at universities around the country to evaluate if such approaches can work. However, in the interim we must at least insure that schools are safe and free of violence, weapons and gang activity.

School Safety Model

Schools are highly vulnerable to interpersonal violence and gang activity; they are no longer the safe havens they once were for children and youth to learn and develop their potentials. Morrison, Furlong, and Morrison (1994) have reframed the issue of school violence within a model of school safety that (a) includes both developmental and educational concepts and (b) emphasizes prevention and schooling effectiveness. These authors argue that effectively dealing with school violence requires careful attention to considerations regarding school safety; schools that are violence free are also effective, caring, nurturing, inclusive, achieving and accepting. The absence of violence is but one element among a larger constellation of positive characteristics of safe schools.

Figure 1 operationalizes this conceptualization along a bipolar dimension that ranges from unsafe to safe; schools are distributed along this dimension, not only in relation to incidents of violence, but also as a function of the extent to which risk factors are diminished and protective factors are enhanced or facilitated (see Figure 1). This figure lists a series of characteristics that define safe-versus-unsafe schools and also lists the school-based risk and protective factors that determine or influence safe versus unsafe school status.

This approach has great relevance to the design of prototype safe school models. It addresses violence within a context of improved schooling effectiveness and safety that is developmental in perspective. Larson (1994) provids a recent review of selected programs and procedures for preventing school violence. He identifies promising violence prevention programs for use at both elementary and secondary school levels (e.g., *The Second Step Program: A Violence Prevention Curriculum* and *The Violence Prevention Curriculum for Adolescents*). Such systematic instruction in curricular programs on a school-wide basis is an essential part of any effective school safety plan. The U.S. Department of Education has funded proposals to establish and demonstrate safe schools plans in 36 school districts across the country. The outcomes of these efforts will significantly advance our ability to achieve and insure school safety.

Figure 2 illustrates the core elements of a prototype safe schools plan. These are the components that must be addressed effectively to insure a safe school environment in today's society. The relative investments of effort and resources in these components will necessarily vary by school site and neighborhood; that is, the higher the crime risk status of the neighborhoods served by a particular school, the less safe that school is likely to be. It is unlikely that schools can be appreciably safer than the neighborhoods in which they are embedded; this fact suggests the

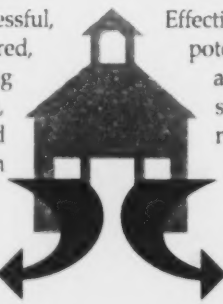
importance of community-based approaches to school safety and violence prevention. However, regardless of the degree of school risk status in this regard, individual schools can systematically assess and address a number of risk and protective factors as part of an overall school safety enhancement plan (see earlier section on Assessing School Safety).

It is important to consider whole-school approaches in dealing with the problems of youth violence prevention and school safety/security issues. Too often, there is a singular focus on the most serious student offenders without a concomitant plan for addressing the potential needs and problems of the full population of students in the school. Such a broad plan would also ultimately serve to prevent or reduce serious offenses. Whole-school approaches can change the climate of a school building and reduce the likelihood that the problems characteristically presented by at-risk students will escalate out of control (Walker, Horner, Sugai, Bullis, Sprague, Bricker, & Kaufman, 1996; Sugai & Horner, 1994).

Larson (1994) also presents a three-level intervention model for addressing school violence and safety that involves primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention efforts. Primary prevention focuses upon enhancing protective factors on a schoolwide basis so that students in general do not become at risk. Secondary prevention involves providing support, mentoring and assistance to at-risk students. Tertiary prevention involves intervention with seriously involved students, many of whom are habitual offenders. Figure 3 illustrates the correspondence between target student type (regular, at-risk and chronic juvenile offender) and the prevention approach most appropriate for addressing the problems of each.

School wide, universal interventions for achieving primary prevention goals will solve approximately 80 to 90 percent of a school's discipline and behavior problems. Secondary-level interventions that are much more costly and labor intensive will solve another 5 to 15 percent of the remaining problems. Finally, tertiary-level interventions that require case management and wrap-around service approaches are appropriate for the remaining 1 to 7 percent of problems that are likely to be extremely severe and that resist traditional approaches and solutions.

Figure 1: BIPOLAR DIMENSIONS AND ATTRIBUTES OF UNSAFE AND SAFE SCHOOLS WITH ASSOCIATED RISK AND PROTECTIVE FACTORS



UNSAFE SCHOOLS

Lack of cohesion, chaotic, stressful, disorganized, poorly structured, ineffective, high risk, gang activity, violent incidents, unclear behavioral and academic expectation

SAFE SCHOOLS

Effective, accepting, freedom from potential physical and psychological harm, absence of violence, nurturing, caring, protective

SCHOOL-BASED RISK FACTORS

- Poor design and use of school space
- Overcrowding
- Lack of caring but firm disciplinary procedures
- Insensitivity and poor accommodation to multi cultural factors
- Student alienation
- Rejection of at-risk students by teachers and peers
- Anger and resentment at school routines and demands for conformity
- Poor supervision

SCHOOL-BASED PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- Positive school climate and atmosphere
- Clear and high performance expectations for all students
- Inclusionary values and practices throughout the school
- Strong student bonding to the school environment and the schooling process
- High levels of student participation and parent involvement in schooling
- Provision of opportunities for skill acquisition and social development
- School wide conflict resolution strategies

Currently, our society seems to favor incarceration as response to juvenile crime and violence. However, we will never realize a satisfactory solution to these social problems by incarceration alone. A three-pronged approach is required that involves detention, intervention and prevention. Detention is for serious habitual offenders who have a low likelihood of being rehabilitated. Intervention involves school and youth services diversion programs that teach skills, adaptive strategies and positive attitudes that will keep at risk students out of the juvenile justice system. Prevention means keeping potentially vulnerable students from becoming at-risk. We need to reallocate resources from detention to intervention and primary prevention.

Barriers to Overcome

Major barriers to achieving positive schooling outcomes and safe, violence free school settings are (1) a failure to recognize and address emergent risk factors; (2) a long history of punishing and excluding at-risk students as a primary solution strategy;

(3) failure to teach the skills and competencies, in cooperation with parents, that support social effectiveness and responsibility among students as part of the core school curriculum; and (4) poor design and supervision of school space so as to prevent discipline problems and student conflict. Until policies and practices are in place that address these barriers, we will be unable to achieve safe schools and to control violence and gang activity on school grounds.

The Need for Legislation to Address Problems of School Safety and Youth Violence

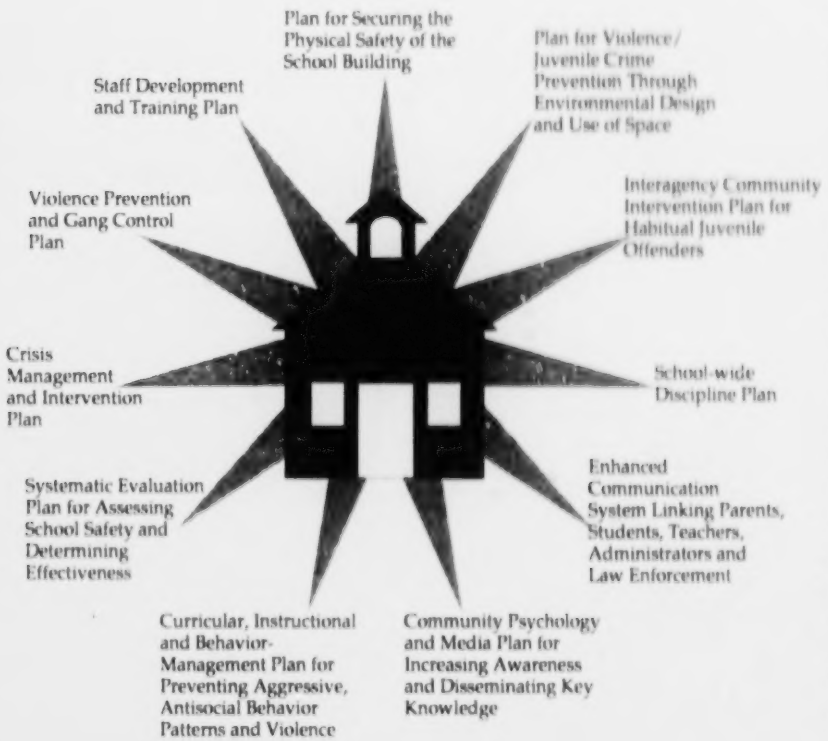
Federal legislation is needed to address the pervasive problems of youth violence in our society and to address the specific risk factors that increase the chances that at-risk youth will adopt a violent lifestyle (e.g., access to weapons, parental neglect and abuse, involvement with alcohol and drugs, association with deviant peers, school drop-out, and so on). Without national awareness and leadership, our society is unlikely to develop an effective response to this toxic social problem.

We believe that Congress should consider passing legislation in the following areas: (1) control of exposure of children and youth to violent acts in the media, (2) mandated child-find activities to identify children at risk for antisocial behavior early in their school careers, and (3) development of family resource centers connected to school districts. All of these areas for Congress to consider and the intent of related legislation are described below.

Media Violence

Media violence is a subject of continuing controversy. There is overwhelming evidence that pervasive, long-term exposure to media violence (i.e., TV cartoons, video games, broadcast news, films, prime-time TV dramas) does two things: (1) it desensitizes children and youth to violent acts, and (2) it makes individuals themselves more likely to commit violent acts (Hughes & Hasbrouck, 1996; Lieberman, 1994). The media's denial of this evidence is nearly identical to the tobacco industry's response to scientific evidence of negative health effects of tobacco use. Media violence serves as a social toxin that can poison the wellspring of our society. Violent acts must be reduced and controlled across the board in the media, and parents must be informed about its effects on their children and how to attenuate them.

Figure 2: MAJOR COMPONENTS OF A PROTOTYPE SAFE SCHOOLS PLAN


Plan for Securing the Physical Safety of the School Building
Staff Development and Training Plan
Plan for Violence/ Juvenile Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design and Use of Space
Violence Prevention and Gang Control Plan
Interagency Community Intervention Plan for Habitual Juvenile Offenders
Crisis Management and Intervention Plan
School-wide Discipline Plan
Systematic Evaluation Plan for Assessing School Safety and Determining Effectiveness
Enhanced Communication System Linking Parents, Students, Teachers, Administrators and Law Enforcement
Curricular, Instructional and Behavior-Management Plan for Preventing Aggressive, Antisocial Behavior Patterns and Violence
Community Psychology and Media Plan for Increasing Awareness and Disseminating Key Knowledge

Curricula exist for assisting educators to teach children how to make sound judgments about and interpretations of what they are exposed to in the media (Hughes & Hasbrouck, 1996). These curricular approaches also inform children and youth about the negative effects that uncritical acceptance of this material can have on their lives.

At-Risk Child-Find

Antisocial children and those at risk for developing antisocial behavior patterns must be found early in their school careers—in preschool settings, if at all possible. The P.L. 99-457 amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act federal legislation mandate child-find activities for preschool children who are developmentally at risk. Similar legislation must be established for children and families who carry risk status for antisocial behavior. If children are not diverted from this path by the end of grade three, then in the great majority of cases, the antisocial behavior should be treated like a chronic disease, such as diabetes, for which there is no cure. That the behavior must be managed and coped with as effectively as possible without the remote expectation of a cure. Early detection and intervention

Figure 3: CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN TARGET STUDENT TYPE AND UNIVERSAL-SELECTED INTERVENTION APPROACHES

Target Student Type	Intervention Approach
Regular *(Typical or not at risk)*	**Primary Prevention (Universal Interventions)** • School wide discipline plans • Instruction in conflict resolution/ anger management strategies • Effective teaching and schooling procedures
At Risk for Antisocial Behavior Patterns	**Secondary Prevention (Individualized, 1-to-1 Interventions)** • Identification of at-risk clusters of children, youth and families • Direct instruction in moral reasoning • Anger management and self control • Family support and parent management training • Consultant based 1-to-1 interventions
Chronic *(Life course persistent)*	**Tertiary Prevention (Wraparound, Comprehensive Interventions)** • Connection of children, youth and care givers to community-based social service agencies • Development of individually tailored, wraparound interventions • Significant family involvement in planning and treatment activities • Coordination with social service agencies, law enforcement, courts and corrections • Drug/alcohol counseling • Alternative placements such as day-treatment centers, specialized schools, residential environments

provide the single best hope we have of successfully addressing this complex problem.

Family Centers

Several states, Kentucky and California prominent among them, are experimenting with family resource centers connected to school districts that (a) allow parents to access support, assistance and training and (b) that also allow parents to deal with the school-related problems of their children in a problem-free, nonjudgmental atmosphere. Such resource centers have great potential for creating the kind of partnerships necessary for parents and schools to work together as an effective team.

Punishing this student population and trying to exclude them from schooling is not, by itself, an effective solution. Police indicate that 90 percent of daytime burglaries are committed by truant youth. Alternative programs and schools need to be developed for antisocial students, and we need to do far better in developing strategies for including them in mainstream educational processes. A therapeutic and habilitative school posture must be adopted, whenever possible, in dealing with this student population, and ways must be found to support and reclaim them.

Recommendations for Enhancing School Safety and Reducing Youth Violence

We believe that the following recommendations will be useful and practicable in addressing school safety issues and in reducing youth violence. Box 4 contains safe schools recommendations, and Box 5 contains recommendations for Youth Violence.

Concluding Remarks

Historically, schools and school systems have been comparatively detached players in the prevention of youth violence. Unfortunately, our society's problems have now spilled over into the process of schooling, so that insuring school safety has emerged as a very high priority among parents of school-age children and youth (Soriano, 1994). Bullying, assault, mean-spirited teasing, harassment, gang activities and victimization on the way to and from school are relatively commonplace occurrences on school campuses. Schools need to continue responding reactively to these crisis events as they occur. However, it is essential that they also begin investing in proactive, preventive approaches that will reduce their future occurrence.

Footnote

Portions of the material contained in this document were included in Walker, H. M. (1996). Violence prevention and school safety. In National Council on Disability [M. Quigley (Ed.)], *Improving the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act: Making schools work for all of America's children*. Washington, DC: National Council on Disability.

Box 4: SAFE SCHOOLS RECOMMENDATIONS

Regularly review Board of Education policies with school staff regarding pupil safety and protection and pupil discipline and staff responsibilities.

- Discuss school crisis intervention plans with all staff and volunteers.
- Set up a staff supervision assignment map of the school that focuses on entrances, exits, and problem areas.
- Enlist formal and informal student leaders, staff, and parents to communicate student behavior and dress code expectations (i.e., direct teaching, intercom announcements, student and parent letters, newsletters, and posted signs).
- Maintain a zero tolerance for weapons, threats, intimidation, fighting and other acts of violence.
- Post signs requiring all visitors to sign in and out at the office and to obtain a visitor/volunteer button or I.D. card.
- Train and encourage all staff to personally contact visitors and refer them to the office.
- Minimize the number of unlocked entrances; post signs referring people to main unlocked entrances.
- Have volunteer and staff teams monitor entrances, exits and halls for students and visitors.
- Require students to have a hall pass when moving about the school during class sessions.
- Limit hall passes to an absolute minimum.

Source: OJJDP Seminar on Youth Violence, San Jose, California, July, 1994.

Box 5: RECOMMENDATIONS FOR REDUCING YOUTH VIOLENCE

- Early childhood interventions in the form of extensive support services and training to teach all families and child care and health-care providers how to deal with early childhood aggression.
- Developmentally appropriate school-based interventions in classroom management, problem solving, and violence prevention.
- Sensitivity to cultural diversity through community involvement in development of violence prevention efforts.
- Mass media cooperation in social responsibility to both limit the depiction of violence during child viewing hours and educate children about violence-prevention efforts.
- Limitation of firearm accessibility to youth, and teaching firearm violence prevention.
- Reduction of alcohol and other drug use among youth.
- Mental health services for perpetrators, victims and witnesses of violence.
- Prejudice-reduction programs that defuse hate crimes.
- Cooperative mob violence prevention efforts through police and community leaders.
- Individual and professional commitment from the psychology community to reduce youth violence.

References

American Psychological Association. (1993). *Violence and youth: Psychology's response*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Bierman, K., Coie, J., Dodge, K., Greenberg, M., Lochman, J., & McMahon, R. (1992). A developmental and clinical model for the prevention of conduct disorder: the FAST Track Program. *Development and Psychopathology, 4*, 509-527.

Capaldi, D., & Patterson, G. R. (in press). Interrelated influences of contextual factors on antisocial behavior in childhood and adolescence for males. In D. Fowles, P. Sutker, & S. Goodman (Eds.), *Psychopathy and antisocial personality: A developmental perspective*. New York: Springer Publications.

Coie, J. (1994, July 21). *The prevention of violence*. Keynote address presented at the National Research Director's Conference. Washington, DC: U.S. Office of Special Education Programs.

Crowe, T. (1991). *Habitual offenders: Guidelines for citizen action and public responses*. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.

Furlong, M. J. (1994). Evaluating school violence trends. *National School Safety Center News Journal, 3*, 23-27.

Hughes, J., & Hasbrouck, J. (1996). Television violence: Implications for violence prevention. *School Psychology Review, 25* (2), 134-151.

Kazdin, A. (1993). Treatment of conduct disorder: Progress and directions in psychotherapy research. *Development and Psychotherapy, 5* (1/2), 277-310.

Larson, J. (1994). Violence prevention in the schools: A review of selected programs and procedures. *School Psychology Review, 23* (2), 151-164.

Lieberman, C. (1994, May). *Television and violence*. Paper presented at the Council of State Governments Conference on School Violence. Westlake Village, CA.

Morrison, G. M., Furlong, M. J., & Morrison, R. L. (1994). School violence to school safety: Reframing the issue for school psychologists. *School Psychology Review, 23* (2), 236-256.

Patterson, G. R., Reid, J. B., & Dishion, T. J. (1992). *Antisocial boys (Vol. 4): A social interactional approach*. Eugene, OR: Castalia.

Reid, J. (1993). Prevention of conduct disorder before and after school entry: Relating interventions to developmental findings. *Development and Psychopathology, 5* (1/2), 243-262.

Roth, J. A. (1994, February). Understanding and preventing violence. *National Institute of Justice Research in Brief*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, National Institute of Justice.

Soriano, M. (1994, Winter). The family's role in violence prevention and response. *School Safety*, 12-16. Westlake Village, CA: National School Safety Center.

Sprague, J. R., Colvin, G., Irvin, L. K., & Stieber, S. (1997a). *The Oregon School Safety Survey*. Available from the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, 1265 University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97403-1265.

Sprague, J. R., Colvin, G., Irvin, L. K., & Stieber, S. (1997b). Assessing school safety in Oregon: How do school principals respond? Available from the Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior, 1265 University of Oregon, Eugene OR 97403-1265.

Wilson, J., & Howell, J. (1993). *A comprehensive strategy for serious, violent, and chronic juvenile offenders*. Washington, DC: Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, U.S. Department of Justice.

Appendix A

The School Crime Assessment Tool

The National School Safety Center has developed the following school-crime assessment tool to assist school administrators in evaluating their vulnerability to school-crime issues and potential school-climate problems.

1. Has your communiity crime rate increased over the past 12 months? ☐ Yes ☐ No
2. Are more than 15 percent of your work-order repairs vandalism related? ☐ Yes ☐ No
3. Do you have an open campus? ☐ Yes ☐ No
4. Has an underground student newspaper emerged? ☐ Yes ☐ No
5. Is your community transiency rate increasing? ☐ Yes ☐ No
6. Do you have an increasing presence of graffiti in your community? ☐ Yes ☐ No
7. Do you have an increased presence of gangs in your community? ☐ Yes ☐ No
8. Is your truancy rate increasing? ☐ Yes ☐ No
9. Are your suspension and expulsion rates increasing? ☐ Yes ☐ No
10. Have you had increased conflicts relative to dress styles, food services and types of music played at special events? ☐ Yes ☐ No
11. Do you have an increasing number of students on probation in your school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
12. Have you had isolated racial fights? ☐ Yes ☐ No
13. Have you reduced the number of extracurricular programs and sports at your school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
14. Have parents increasingly withdrawn students from your school because of fear? ☐ Yes ☐ No
15. Has the budget for professional development opportunities and staff in-service training been reduced or eliminated? ☐ Yes ☐ No
16. Are you discovering more weapons on your campus? ☐ Yes ☐ No
17. Do you have written screening and selection guidelines for new teachers and other youth-serving professinals who work in your school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
18. Are drugs easily available in or around your school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
19. Are more than 40 percent of your students bused to school? ☐ Yes ☐ No
20. Have you had a student demonstration or other signs of unrest within the past 12 months? ☐ Yes ☐ No

Scoring and Interpretation

Multiply each affirmative answer by 5 and add the total.

0–20	Indicates no significant school safety problems.
25–45	An emerging school safety problem (safe-school plan should be developed).
50–70	Significant potential for school safety problem (safe-school plan should be developed).
Over 70	School is a sitting time bomb (safe-school plan should be developed immediately).

Appendix B

The Oregon School Safety Survey (OSSS)

Jeffrey Sprague, Geoffrey Colvin, and Larry Irvin
Institute on Violence and Destructive Behavior
College of Education
University of Oregon

For further information contact Jeffrey Sprague, Ph.D.
Telephone (541) 346-2465
E-mail *jeff_sprague@ccmail.uoregon.edu*

Essential Questions for School Safety Planning

Please take a few minutes to complete the attached survey. Please place a check (X) next to the item that best reflects your opinion for each question. Your responses will be valuable in determining training and support needs related to school safety and violence prevention.

YOUR ROLE: Administrator___ Teacher___ Special Education Teacher___ Parent___
Related Service Provider___ Community Member___ Student___ Other___

YOUR SCHOOL: Elementary___ Middle/Junior High___ High School___ Alternative School___

NUMBER OF STUDENTS: Less than 500___ Less than1000___ More than 1000___

LOCATION: Rural___ Small Urban (city population less than 250,000)___
Large Urban (city population more than 250,000)___

SECTION ONE: Assessment of Risk Factors for School Safety and Violence RATING

Indicate the extent to which these factors exist in your school and neighborhood	Rating			
	NOT AT ALL	MINIMALLY	MODERATELY	EXTENSIVELY
1. Illegal weapons				
2. Vandalism				
3. Student transience (i.e., changes in school enrollment)				
4. Graffiti				
5. Gang activity				
6. Truancy				
7. Student suspensions and expulsions.				
8. Students adjudicated by the court.				
9. Parents withdrawing students from school because of safety concerns				
10. Child abuse in the home.				
11. Trespassing on school grounds				
12. Poverty				
13. Crimes (e.g. theft, extortion, hazing)				
14. Illegal drug and alcohol use				
15. Fights, conflict, and assault				
16. Incidence of bullying intimidation, and harassment				
17. Deteriorating condition of the physical facilities in the school				

Section Two: Assessment of Response Plans for School Safety and Violence

Indicate the extent to which these factors exist in your school and neighborhood	Rating			
	NOT AT ALL	MINIMALLY	MODERATELY	EXTENSIVELY
1. Opportunity for extracurricular programs and sports activities				
2. Professional development and staff training				
3. Crisis and emergency response plans				
4. Consistently implemented school-wide discipline plans				
5. Student support services in school (e.g., counseling, monitoring, support team systems)				
6. Parent involvement in school (e.g., efforts to enhance school safety, student support)				
7. Student preparation for crises and emergencies				
8. Supervision of students across all settings				
10. Student participation and involvement in academic activities				
11. Positive school climate for learning				
12. Acceptance of diversity				
13. Response to conflict and problem solving				
14. Collaboration with community resources				
15. High expectations for student learning and productivity				
16. Effective student-teacher relationships				
17. Deteriorating condition of the physical facilities in the school				

Some items adapted from instruments developed by: Oregon School Safety Survey, Sprague, Colvin & Irvin (1995); The National School Safety Center (1992); Furlong, M. J. & Morrison, G. M. (1994). School violence and safety inperspective (9-article mini-series). SCHOOL PSYCHOLOGY REVIEW, *23, 139-261.*

SECTION THREE: Your Comments on School Safety and Violence.

1. What is the most pressing safety need in your school?

2. What school safety activities does your school do best?

3. What topics are most important for training and staff development?

4. What are the biggest barriers to improved school safety measures?

5. What other comments do you have regarding school safety?

6. What factors not included in this survey do you believe affect school safety?

Oregon School Safety Survey. Sprague, Colvin & Irvin (1995)

APPENDIX C

Additional Resources on Antisocial Behavior in Children and Youth

1. American Psychological Association. (1993). Violence and Youth: Psychology's Response (*Volume I: Summary Report of the American Psychological Association Commission on Violence and Youth*). Available from: American Psychological Association, Public Interest Directorate, 750 First Street, N.E., Washington, DC 20002-4242.
2. Patterson, G. R., Reid, J. B., & Dishion, T. J. (1992). *Antisocial Boys*. Eugene, Oregon: Castalia Publishing. Available from: Castalia Publishing (see below).
3. Dishion, T. J., & Patterson, S. G. (1996). *Preventive Parenting with Love, Encouragement and Limits: The Preschool Years*. Eugene, Oregon: Castalia Publishing. Available from: Castalia Publishing Co., PO Box 1587, Eugene, OR 97440 (503) 343-4433.
4. Three issues of the *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Problems: Reclaiming Children and Youth*. Available from: National Educational Service (see below).
   a. Containing Crisis: A Guide to Managing School Emergencies
   b. Rage and Aggression
   c. Gangs, Guns, and Kids
5. Eggert, L. L. (1994). Anger Management for Youth: Stemming Aggression and Violence. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service. Available from: National Educational Service (see below).
6. Stephens, R. D. (1995). Safe Schools: A Handbook for Violence Prevention. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service. Available from: National Educational Service (800) 733-6786 or (812) 336-7700 or fax (812) 336-7790.
7. Walker, H. M., Colvin, G., & Ramsey, E. (1995). Antisocial Behavior in School: Strategies and Best Practices. Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks/Cole. Available from: Brooks/Cole Publishing, 511 Forest Lodge Road, Pacific Grove, CA 93950 (800) 354-0092.
8. Walker, H. M. (1995). The Acting Out Child: Coping with Classroom Disruption (2nd ed.). Longmont, CO: Sopris West, Inc. Available from: Sopris West, Inc., 1140 Boston Avenue, Longmont, CO 80501 (800) 547-6747 or fax (303) 776-5934.
9. Frymier, J. (Ed.) (1996). Teaching Students Responsible [Hot Topics Series; Monica Overman, Series Ed.]. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa, Center for Evaluation, Development, Research. Available from: Phi Delta Kappa, P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, IN 47402-0789 (812) 339-1156 or fax (812) 339-0018, Internet 74116.3542@compuserve.com.
10. Furlong, M. J., & Morrison, G. M. (Eds.). (1994). School violence and safety in perspective (9-article miniseries). School Psychology Review, 23(2), 139-261.
11. Committee for Children. Second Step Violence Prevention Curriculum for Preschool-Grade 8. Available from: Committee for Children, 2203 Airport Way South, Suite 500, Seattle WA 98124-2027, (800) 634-4449 or fax (206) 343-1445.
12. Heartsprings, Inc. (1995). PeaceBuilders: A Comprehensive Alternative to Violence. Available from Heartsprings, Inc., P.O. Box 12158, Tucson AZ 85732 (520) 322-9977 or fax (520) 322-9983.
13. Committee for Children. Safe by Design. Available from: Committee for Children, 2203 Airport Way South, Suite 500, Seattle WA 98124-2027, (800) 634-4449 or fax (206) 343-1445.
14. School Safety. The National School Safety Center New Journal. Available from: The National School Safety Center, 4165 Thousand Oaks Blvd., Suite 290, Westlake Village CA 91362 (805) 373-9977 or fax (805) 373-9277.

OSSC Bulletin
VOLUME 41 · NUMBER 1 · FALL 1997

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Eugene OR
Permit No. 63

University of Oregon
Oregon School
Study Council
College of Education
1215 University of Oregon
Eugene, OR 97403-1215

OSSC BULLETIN